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CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

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Bulletin

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GUY P. JONES
EDITOR

Typhus Fever Control Important to California.

There can be no denial of the fact that there is considerable typhus fever in California, particularly in the southern part of the state. The number of recognized, reported cases is low, but in the opinion of health officers who are best qualified to know, many mild and unrecognized cases occur. The disease is endemic in Mexico and the Mexican laboring population within California is growing rapidly. It is logical to believe that the disease is brought into the state by these laborers, and since cases of the disease are reported at more or less regular intervals in various sections of southern California, it is safe to assume that many more cases occur than are reported. The fact that the disease is rare in this country and that comparatively few practitioners have seen cases of typhus strengthens this assumption.

Dr. Charles H. Halliday, full-time health officer of Monterey county, had considerable experience in the control of typhus in Poland and Russia during and after the war. He is well qualified to speak upon the epidemiology and control of typhus and his paper to be read at the annual conference of health officers in Coronado, September 10-14, will be timely and of practical use to health officers.

More Scarlet Fever Less Smallpox in 1923.

A comparison of morbidity statistics for the first six months of 1923 with those for first six months of 1922 shows a considerable decrease in the prevalence of smallpox, significant increases in measles and whooping cough, a decrease in diphtheria prevalence and a considerable increase in scarlet fever.

The comparative figures are as follows:

Cases	1922	1923
	Jan.-June	Jan.-June
Diphtheria -----	4530	4206 decrease
Scarlet Fever -----	3107	4424 increase
Smallpox -----	1752	630 decrease
Measles -----	689	19612 increase
Whooping Cough -----	1879	4134 increase

Smallpox is apparently on the decline, pending the time when a new crop of unvaccinated individuals shall become a factor in a new rise in prevalence of the disease.

Measles is widely prevalent, although there have not been so many cases reported during any month since May, when 6165 cases were reported. We seem to be on the ascending grade of the regular three or four-year measles cycle. This is distinctly a "measles year."

Diphtheria shows a slight decrease over last year. The disease is far too prevalent, however, and is likely to remain so until such time as standard

methods of control are made universal in their application.

Whooping cough is less prevalent at the present time but there are more than twice as many cases reported as were reported during the same period of 1922. The maximum number occurred in May, when 1088 cases were reported. This serious disease of childhood is still regarded frivolously in many communities, in spite of its heavy toll of deaths and the untold number of disastrous after effects that follow in its wake.

A Story of Child Life Saving.

Kathleen Norris, of whom Californians may well be proud, has a story in one of the current magazines that should be read by everyone who may or may not be interested in the welfare of children. It is the story of the capitulation of a redoubtable Mrs. Callahan to the quiet insistence of a public health nurse and the saving of a wee bairn; the awakening to a realization that "these nurses and inspectors and visitors, for whom she had always had so violent a contempt" were "really a sort of great army, unrequited, unrecognized, toiling away year after year under the great mass of ignorant and suffering humanity, fighting their pathetic battles for the world's less fortunate children." The story itself is just a pleasing narrative of an everyday occurrence in the life of a public health nurse, raised to dramatic intensity through the skill of a trained writer.

In this age, when questions of population and the falling birth rate are of such vital import, it behooves us to give attention to every factor that has any bearing on this subject. It is time that we ceased thinking in terms of the unfitness and weakness of women. This splendid modern woman, grown taller and more vigorous because, freed from restricting fashions of dress, she exercises more and consequently eats more, has become better fitted to be the mother of finer sons and daughters, the promise of a stronger race.—Clelia Duel Mosher, M.D., in "Some of the Casual Factors in the Increased Height of College Women," Journal of the A. M. A., August 18, 1923.

The Annual Convention of California Health Officers will be held at Coronado, September 10-14, in conjunction with the Annual Convention of the League of California Municipalities.

Pediatrics is the study of the biologic problems of the child, not simply the study of diseases in children, and it is from this point of view that it should be practiced and taught.
—Borden S. Veeder, M.D.

Plan State-Wide Mosquito Campaign.

Mr. G. C. Kelly, Secretary of the Pittsburg Chamber of Commerce, recently addressed the California Association of Commercial Secretaries, assembled in annual convention at Stanford University, upon the subject of mosquito abatement. He advocated the undertaking of a mosquito abatement campaign throughout the State of California under centralized and competent direction "in a big western way," and a resolution covering his recommendations was adopted by the association. He recounted the efforts now being made at Pittsburg in the control of mosquitoes and said further:

"They are forming their own district and in spite of the fact that it may increase their taxes, in view of the fact that they are situated in one of the richer counties, they favor a state-wide campaign with state financial aid in mosquito abatement, and this latter only because they want to make possible a thorough state cleanup of mosquitoes. They are perfectly willing to pay by themselves for the cleanup of their own district and are well able to do so. They are not willing that California shall ever be classed with one of the other mosquito-infested parts of the world, even of parts of the United States that we know of. They also know that there are quite a number of other districts favoring this move, and have resolved to work for it in spite of the fact that opposition is shown in some quarters. They consider the work just as necessary and just as profitable; in a relative sense, considering all facts involved, as our state highways for which we stand many times the expense that would need to be borne in eliminating the mosquitoes, and the penalty for not promoting this work must be at least relatively as great as we would experience if we neglected our highways.

Under the abatement district law, it is practically impossible to handle the situation in many communities. Some communities are too poor. The tax provided for by law is insufficient when applied in some districts, and although some are willing to go ahead and do the best they can under the existing law, they find that they can not fully fill the bill. Others, owing to location, can only half fill the bill because their neighbors on the windward side can not be gotten to act with them, and this is particularly true of a couple of localities of which I have knowledge in sections of the state where salt-marsh mosquitoes abound.

In the interior valleys, where irrigation is carried on very extensively and where the Anopheles are passing out malaria inoculations very generously, the necessity for coordinate action because of the high malaria rate makes it imperative that effective action be taken without further delay.

Although some few districts of the state are not directly affected, this problem must be handled upon a state-wide basis, because it is growing. It would be most profitable and economical if it were taken care of now."

What Is Child Hygiene?

Child Hygiene is nothing more than the application to the individual of the measures that lead to the normal growth and development of the child, and the methods by which these measures can be applied to large numbers of children. It includes not only physical health but also mental health. The change in conception of the physician from the healer of disease to the counselor of health is the great advance made by the present era of medicine, despite the tremendous impetus and eclat that have been associated with medical research in the past few years; and this is particularly true in the field of pediatrics. Not that in any way the basic importance of medical research is to be belittled or the debt which preventive medicine owes to pure science is to be minimized. The scientific investigator of the diseases that play a large factor in childhood must necessarily be a specialist in some fundamental branch of the medical sciences; but the mere fact that a specialist in chemistry or pathology is studying the diseases of childhood does not necessarily make him a pediatrician—it is a knowledge of the child which does this. The reduction in infant mortality, which is the proudest achievement of pediatrics, has not been due primarily to the development of any method of artificial feeding or to the study of disease, but to education in hygiene and the study and correction of the environmental factors which lower the physical well-being of the infant.

—Borden S. Veeder, M.D.

For the tuberculous, fatigue is the flash from the focus, and he who acknowledges the message by immediately throwing on the brakes, is the patient whom we can appoint engineer of his own case. The patient who never pushes himself to the point of fatigue, or who at once stops short when it is upon him, will never delay his "cure," by any measures within his control, but will hasten it.

—Allen K. Krause.

The "Fete of the Sun."

Health officers who attend the annual convention at Coronado, September 10, will be able to witness the pageant to be presented in celebration of the total eclipse of the sun. The dramatic climax comes with the beginning of darkness at the time of the eclipse. Following is the official description of the spectacular undertaking:

"This mighty spectacular pageant will be presented in three episodes: The careless acceptance of the blessings of Nature by man; the sudden removal of all light,—man's fear and repentance; the forgiveness and restoration of the favor of the Almighty. The scenes are laid in the festival place of a great medieval city. Revelry, dancing and careless dissipation hold sway with no thought beyond the immediate present. The material climax is reached when the arrogant king orders the massacre of the older senators who oppose his wishes. His daughter pleads in vain for a more kindly decree. Her lover, a young captain of the guard, refuses to obey the king's order and is sentenced to die first, by the infuriated monarch. A prophet, a weird, majestic figure, appears and forbids the murder and calls upon the heavens to support him. At this moment all eyes are turned to the sky and the gradual darkening of the sun is observed. In haste the festivities cease, and with solemn ritual and dance, a mighty procession of supplicants approaches the High Altar seeking Divine Mercy. The darkness deepens. The prophet stands alone. No word escapes him. In chaos and fear the terrified people determine to sacrifice the King and his daughter that the anger of the gods may be assuaged. The multitude, robed in black, moves sullenly to the sacrificial altar. Here and there torches are lit as the dreadful wail and the music of lamentation is heard. The total eclipse is consummate; now must the King and his daughter give their lives that their people may live. For three minutes during the time of total darkness, the whole spectacle remains in statuesque repose, without movement, without sound, a picture made desolate by the departure of the Light of Day. The prophet moves to the side of the Princess' lover, the shadow slowly departs, the light appears as the soft strains of mysterious music give hope, while a band of white messengers proclaim that the Mercy of the Creator is infinite. Once again, hope and joy are supreme and the citizens return to their rejoicing with a fuller appreciation of the Miracles of Nature."

MORBIDITY.***Diphtheria.**

100 cases of diphtheria have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 30, Santa Cruz County 7, San Francisco 33, Oakland 7, Los Angeles County 4, Long Beach 2, Santa Rosa 1, Alameda 1, Berkeley 1, Eureka 1, Orange County 1, Riverside 2, Mendocino County 1, Ventura County 1, Sacramento 1, Redlands 1, Contra Costa County 1, Chino 1, Fresno County 1, San Fernando 1, San Diego 1; San Mateo 1.

Measles.

158 cases of measles have been reported, as follows: San Francisco 88, Banning 6, Sonoma County 9, Los Angeles 11, Lake County 2, Fresno County 2, Eureka 1, Hanford 1, Trinity County 3, San Luis Obispo County 1, Napa 1, Los Gatos 4, Palo Alto 2, Salinas 1, Sacramento 1, Yuba County 1, Fort Bragg 2, Berkeley 5, Riverside 1, Los Angeles County 4, Alhambra 1, Monterey County 4, Alameda 3, Calistoga 2, San Diego 2.

Scarlet Fever.

38 cases of scarlet fever have been reported, as follows: San Francisco 6, Los Angeles 5, Sonoma County 1, Monterey County 3, Poerona 1, Los Angeles County 4, Berkeley 2, Pacific Grove 1, Long Beach 1, Pasadena 1, Sacramento 1, Tehama County 1, Richmond 2, Palo Alto 2, Modesto 1, Hanford 2, Colusa 1, San Diego 2, Newman 1.

Whooping Cough.

47 cases of whooping cough have been reported, as follows: Sonoma County 7, Monterey County 6, Santa Monica 1, Fresno

County 2, Oakland 3, Glendale 2, Lake County 1, Palo Alto 1, Los Angeles County 5, San Francisco 2; Long Beach 2, Shasta County 3, Berkeley 4, Solano County 2, Pomona 1, San Diego 4, Fullerton 1.

Smallpox.

16 cases of smallpox have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles County 5, Pomona 6, Exeter 1, Chino 2, Los Angeles 2.

Typhoid Fever.

41 cases of typhoid fever have been reported, as follows: San Francisco 4, Pasadena 1, Rendondo Beach 7, Los Angeles 4, Long Beach 1, Vacaville 1, San Bernardino County 3, Lassen County 1, Hawthorne 1, Los Angeles County 5, San Fernando 1, Sonoma County 1, Venice 1, Fresno County 2, Oakland 2, California 6.

Anthrax.

Santa Rosa reported 1 case of anthrax.

Cerebrospinal Meningitis.

San Francisco reported 1 case of cerebrospinal meningitis.

Poliomyelitis.

4 cases of poliomyelitis have been reported, as follows: Hanford 1, Los Angeles 1, Pasadena 1, San Fernando 1.

Epidemic Encephalitis.

Los Angeles reported 1 case of epidemic encephalitis.

*From reports received on August 20th and 21st for week ending August 18th.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTS.

Disease	1923			Reports for week ending Aug. 18 received by Aug. 21	1922			Reports for week ending Aug. 19 received by Aug. 22		
	Week ending				July 29	Aug. 5	Aug. 12			
	July 28	Aug. 4	Aug. 11							
Anthrax	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		
Cerebrospinal Meningitis	0	1	5	1	2	1	1	4		
Chickenpox	43	37	34	13	20	22	26	13		
Diphtheria	129	99	113	100	119	107	122	91		
Dysentery (Bacillary)	0	2	2	0	16	5	6	1		
Epidemic Encephalitis	3	4	2	1	2	4	5	1		
Gonorrhoea	83	93	127	73	72	169	105	74		
Influenza	14	2	2	4	4	3	7	6		
Leprosy	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0		
Malaria	8	2	5	5	7	12	9	3		
Measles	238	194	177	158	6	5	9	9		
Mumps	10	9	2	4	6	14	10	12		
Pneumonia	96	27	41	23	60	67	43	25		
Poliomyelitis	1	6	2	4	1	2	7	0		
Scarlet Fever	70	62	61	38	37	33	34	27		
Smallpox	34	36	33	16	15	31	16	10		
Syphilis	103	168	140	71	116	138	120	99		
Tuberculosis	120	219	108	138	188	122	152	110		
Typhoid Fever	23	31	24	41	38	23	35	16		
Whooping Cough	78	69	69	47	59	64	59	47		
Totals	1054	1061	947	738	768	822	768	548		

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